

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-15

RSC-01 H-03 NIC-01 DRC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 PRS-01 OMB-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 744

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH ELECTION - LATEST FIGURES, SOME CONFUSION

SUMMARY: LATEST FIGURES, THOUGH NOT OFFICIAL AND FINAL
INDICATE THAT SWEDEN'S ELECTION HAS TURNED OUT AS STALE-
MATE. EVERYONE NOW BUSILY TRYING FIGURE OUT UNPRECEDENTED
SITUATION. COALITION BEGINNING APPEAR UNLIKELY. BEST
BET IS PALME WILL HANG ON.
WITH POSSIBILITY OF ELECTIONS
IN SPRING NEXT YEAR. NEW RIKSDAG CONVENING JAN 1974
WILL HAVE MANY PRACTICAL PROBLEMS FROM VERY BEGINNING
SUCH AS CHOOSING COMMITTEES. END SUMMARY.

1. ALTHOUGH MINOR COUNTING PROBLEMS PERSIST, ALL BALLOTS
INCLUDING MAIL BALLOTS ARE NOW IN. IT APPEARS CERTAIN
THAT SWEDISH ELECTION HAS ENDED IN A DRAW. LATEST
UNOFFICIAL TALLY (FUGURES IN PARENTHESES 1970 ELECTION
RESULTS):

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P/C

RIKSDAG SEATS

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS	43.58 (45.3)	156 (163)
COMMUNISTS (VPK)	5.32 (4.8)	19 (17)
CENTER	25.04 (19.9)	90 (71)
MODERATE	14.29 (11.5)	51 (41)
LIBERAL	9.41 (16.2)	34 (58)

2. THREE OPPOSITION BURGEON PARTIES NOW HAVE 48.79P/C
OPPOSED TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND COMMUNISTS WITH 48.90 P/C
RIKSDAG MANDATES ARE DIVIDED 175 - 175. OFFICIAL
RECOUNT IS NOW IN PROCESS AND GOVERNMENT HOPES TO
ANNOUNCE FINAL OFFICIAL FIGURES SEPT. 21.

3. LIBERAL LEADER HELEN AND NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS HAVE
DEMANDED PALME GOVERNMENT RESIGN, BUT IT APPEARS PALME
WILL STAY ON FOR TIME BEING. CENTER PARTY SPOKESMAN
DECLINED YESTERDAY TO SUPPORT HELEN'S DEMAND THAT PALME
RESIGN. CENTER LEADER FALLDIN HAS NOT DECLARED HIS
INTENTIONS YET. SOME OPPOSITION QUARTERS HAVE DISCOVERED
A "PRECEDENT" THAT GOVERNMENTS RESIGN AT A CHANGE IN
MONARCHY, BUT THIS IS DISPUTED AND WE BELIEVE PALME WILL
IGNORE IT.

4. PARTY LEADERS, CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERTS, POLITICAL
SCIENTISTS AND JOURNALISTS ARE BUSILY TRYING TO FIGURE
OUT WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN IN UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION
OF AN EVENLY-DIVIDED RIKSDAG WHERE MAJOR ISSUES MIGHT
HAVE TO DEPEND ON THE CHANCE OF A DRAW. CENTER PARTY
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MET TODAY TO TAKE STOCK OF SITUATION.
FALLDIN HAS ALREADY RULED OUT POSSIBILITY OF CENTER-SOCIAL
DEMOCRAT COALITION, NOTING THERE IS NOT POLITICAL BASE
FOR SUCH COOPERATION. HELEN HAS TAKEN SIMILAR STAND,
THOUGH SOME YOUNGER LIBERALS ARE PUBLICLY ADVOCATING
EXAMINATION OF COALITION IDEA. ON OTHER SIDE, IT APPEARS
PALME IS NOT NOW IN POSITION TO OFFER COALITION TO
LIBERALS, SINCE POWERFUL LABOR FEDERATION CHIEF GUNNAR
NILSSON FLATLY AND PUBLICLY OPPOSED TO IT (SEE SEPTTEL).
ALTHOUGH NO ONE EXCEPT PARTIES ON TWO WINGS HAVE RULED
OUT SOCDEM-CENTER-LIBERAL "GRAND COALITION," THERE APPEARS
LITTLE BASIS NOW FOR SUCH A COALITION.

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5. WITH COALITION NOW RECEDING AS A POSSIBILITY IT
BECOMES LIKELY THAT SOCDEMS WILL TRY TO CONTINUE IN
GOVERNMENT AS LONG AS THEY CAN AND CAREFULLY CHOOSE TIME
FOR AN ELECTION. SWEDISH CONSTITUTION PROVIDES THAT A
NEW RIKSDAG CANNOT BE DISOLVED FOR 90 DAYS, HENCE A
NEW ELECTION IS RULED OUT UNTIL LATE SPRING, 1974.
SOCDEMS ARE PERILOUSLY DEPENDENT ON COMMUNIST SUPPORT,
NEVERTHELESS, JUST TO KEEP DAY TO DAY BUSINESS GOING IN

RISDAG. TOO MUCH OPEN COOPERATION WITH AND DEPENDENCE
UPON COMMUNISTS WOULD DIM CHANCES OF SOCDEMS IN ANY
FUTURE ELECTION.

6. PALME WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE GOVERNING DURING THE
LAME-DUCK RIKSDAG SESSION, OCTOBER -DECEMBER, BUT THE
PARACTICLA PROBLEMS WILL ARISE EVEN BEFORE NEW RIKSDAG
CONVENES IN JANUARY. ONE OF THE FIRST PIECES OF BUSINESS
OF NEW RIKSDAG WILL BE TO ELECT SPEAKER AND 16 STANDING
COMMITTEES (SWEDEN'S RIKSDAG USES A COMMITTEE SYSTEM TO
PREPARE LEGISLATION AND THESE COMMITTEES ARE VERY POWERFUL,
SOMEWHAT ON AMERICAN LINE). IF THE TWO BLOCS HOLD
TOGETHER, THEN A SERIES OF TIE VOTES WOULD ENSUE. THE
ONLY WAY TO BREAK A TIE IS BY DRAWING LOTS. IT IS HARD
TO IMAGINE GOVERNMENT PLAYING ROULETTE WITH CHAIRMANSIPS
OF KEY COMMITTEES. THUS, PALME WILL BE UNDER PRESSURE
TO COMMENCE NEGOTIATIONS WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS IN
DECEMBER AIMED AT REACHING COMPROMISE DEALS. COMPLICATING
HIS PROBLEM IS THE NEW TRUCULENCE OF STRENGTHENED COMMUNIST
PARTY, WHICH IS NOW DEMANDING SEATS ON ALL 16 COMMITTEES,
INCLUDING DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THEY SIT ON ONLY
11 COMMITTEES IN THIS RIKSDAG, NONE OF THEM MAJOR.
BOURGEOIS PARTIES CAN BE EXPECTED TO RESIST BITTERLY
COMMUNIST REPRESENTATION ON IMPORTANT COMMITTEES. THUS,
PALME CANNOT RULE OUT PROSPECT THAT RIKSDAG COULD BECOME
STALEMATED ON ITS VERY FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS AND BE
FORCED TO TURN TO LOTTERY. A NEWSPAPER CARTOONIST
SUMMED IT UP TODAY BY PICTURING A LEGISLATOR BEGINNING
HIS RIKSDAG SPEECH WITH THE TRADITIONAL "MR. SPEAKER" --
FOLLOWED BY, "DEAR LOTTERY."
COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT PALME HOPES TO GET THROUGH
THE AUTUMN IN REASONABLE SHAPE AND TO HORSE-TRADE
SHREWDLY ENOUGH TO HAVE AT LEAST MINIMAL CONTROL OF NEW
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RIKSDAG. BUT HIS PRESTIGE HAS BEEN HURT, AND HE DOES
NOT KNOW WHAT CONCLUSIONS SOCDEM SATRAPS WILL ULTIMATELY
DRAW FROM DISAPPOINTING ELECTION. THUS, NEXT SIX MONTHS
ARE CRITICAL FOR PALME, AND HE IS NO SURE THING TO SURVIVE
EVEN THOUGH RIKSDAG OPPOSITION CANNOT BRING HIM DOWN BY
ITSELF.
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